176

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Advance Data

From Vital and Health Statistics of the National Center for Health Statistics

AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes for January–March 1989

Provisional Data From the National Health Interview Survey

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Introduction

The National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) has included a special set of supplemental questions on the adult population's knowledge and attitudes about acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) in the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS). The first AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes Survey was in the field from August through December 1987. Provisional results of that survey were published on a monthly basis in *Advance Data From Vital and Health Statistics* (Nos. 146, 148, 150, 151, and 153). A public use data tape containing the information collected in 1987 is available from NCHS.

During the first 4 months of 1988, the NHIS AIDS questionnaire was revised to meet current program needs for information about AIDS awareness. The revised AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes Survey entered the field in May 1988. Provisional findings for the remainder of 1988 were published periodically (*Advance Data From Vital and Health Statistics* Nos. 160, 161, 163, 164, 167, and 175); in addition, two special reports focusing on minority populations were published from the 1988 data (*Advance Data From Vital and Health Statistics* Nos. 165 and 166). A public use data tape of the 1988 AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes Survey will be available at the end of the year. The NHIS AIDS questionnaire used in 1988 will be continued throughout 1989. Reports based on the 1989 data will be issued on a quarterly basis. This report presents provisional data for the period January–March 1989.

The *Advance Data* reports describing the NHIS AIDS data have been restricted to simple descriptive statistics to facilitate their timely release. Thus, these reports do not attempt to explain or interpret differences among population subgroups or to examine relationships among various measures of knowledge and AIDS-related behavior (e.g., testing). The NHIS AIDS data bases permit more complex analyses than those presented in this series of *Advance Data* reports, and such analyses are being undertaken by various groups in the Public Health Service.

The AIDS questionnaires were designed to estimate public knowledge about AIDS virus (HIV) transmission and its prevention. The data were needed as input for the planning and development of AIDS educational campaigns and for monitoring major educational efforts, for example, the series of radio and television public service announcements entitled "American Responds to AIDS" and the brochure "Understanding AIDS," both developed by the Centers for Disease Control.

The NHIS AIDS questionnaires were developed by the National Center for Health Statistics and interagency working groups established by the Information, Education and Risk Factor Reduction Subcommittee of the Public Health Service Executive Task Force on AIDS. The working groups included representatives from the Centers for Disease Control; the National Institutes of Health; the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration; and the Health Resources and Services Administration.

The current AIDS questionnaire includes items on sources of AIDS information; self-assessed levels of AIDS knowledge; basic facts about the AIDS virus (HIV) and how it is transmitted; blood donation experience; awareness of and experience with the blood test for HIV; personal acquaintance with persons with AIDS or HIV; and willingness to take part in a proposed national seroprevalence survey. A general risk behavior question, similar to that asked by the Red Cross of potential blood donors, is included in the current AIDS questionnaire.

This report presents provisional data for January–March 1989 for most

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items included in the AIDS questionnaire. Table 1 displays percent distributions of persons 18 years of age and over by response categories according to age, sex, race, and education. In most cases, the actual questions asked of the respondents are reproduced verbatim in table 1 along with the coded response categories. In a few cases, questions or response categories have been rephrased or combined for clearer or more concise presentation of results. Refusals and other nonresponse categories (generally comprising less than 1 percent of total responses) are excluded from the denominator in the calculation of estimates, but responses of "don't know" are included.

The NHIS AIDS questionnaire uses the phrase "the AIDS virus" rather than "HIV," because it was felt that the general population might not be familiar with the more scientific terminology at the time the survey began. In this report, the two terms will be used synonymously.

Selected findings

The following highlights describe various aspects of AIDS knowledge and attitudes as observed in the January–March 1989 data from the NHIS AIDS survey. Unless otherwise noted in the text, all measures described remained stable over this 3-month period. Any differences cited in the text are statistically significant at the .05 level (see table II for provisional standard errors of estimates).

Sources of AIDS information—In the first quarter of 1989, there were no changes in the proportions of U.S. adults who reported having seen or heard public service announcements (PSAs) about AIDS on television (80 percent) or on the radio (44 percent). As was true in 1988, less than one-fourth of those adults who had seen such PSAs stated that the announcements were part of the series entitled "America Responds to AIDS;" almost half did not remember. There was a decline in the percentage of adults who reported having read any brochures or pamphlets about AIDS in the month preceding interview—24 percent in January–March compared to 28 percent in December. There was a smaller decrease in the proportion of adults who said they had ever read brochures or pamphlets about AIDS, from 65 percent in December to 63 percent in January–March.

Sociodemographic differentials in exposure to media coverage of AIDS generally remained the same in the first quarter of 1989 as throughout 1988. Reported exposure to AIDS messages in print, on television, and on the radio decreased with age and increased with education. Black adults and men were more likely than white adults and women to have heard PSAs on the radio. Black individuals were more likely than white individuals to have read brochures or pamphlets in the month preceding interview but equally likely ever to have done so.

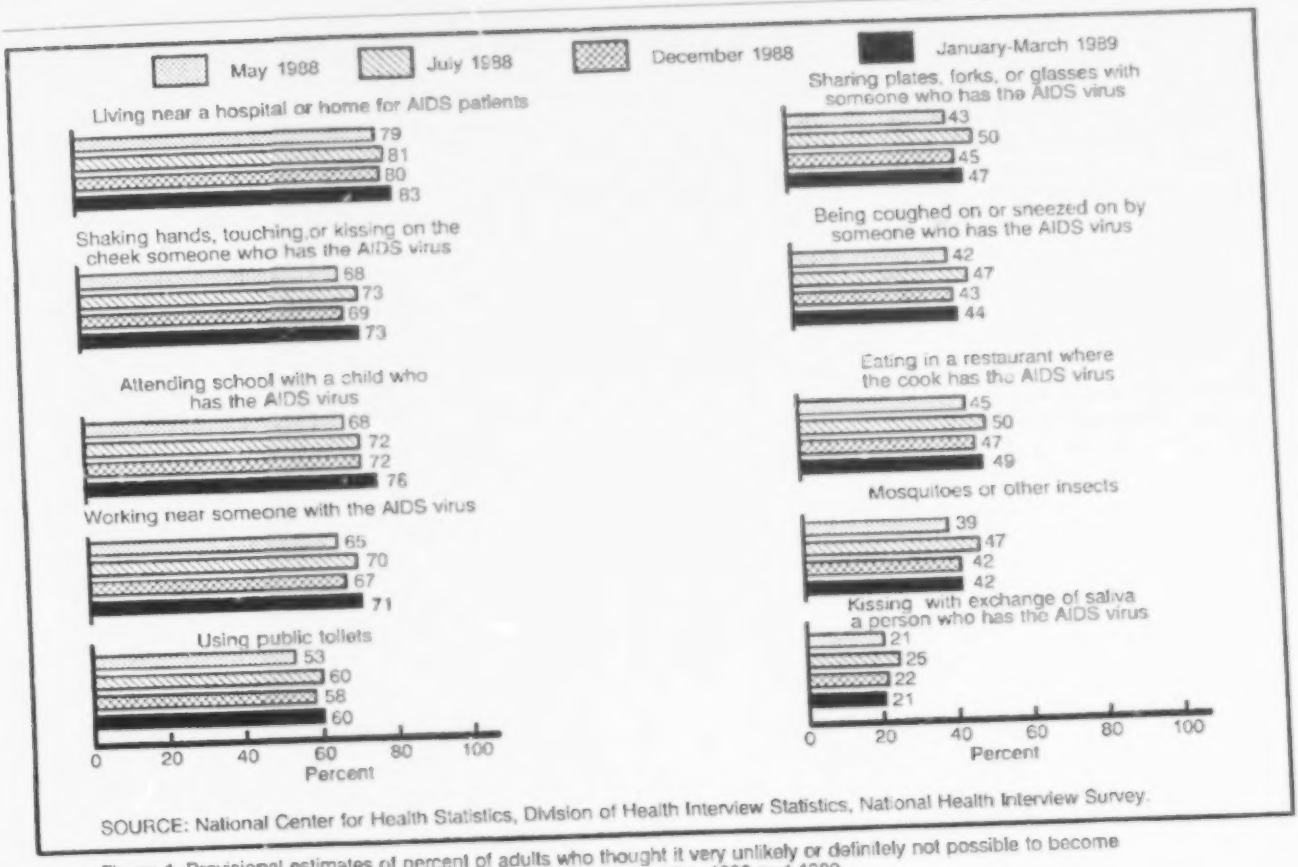
Sixty-three percent of adults with children age 10–17 years reported having discussed AIDS with these children; 60 percent stated that their children age 10–17 years had received AIDS education in school. Sixty-one percent of adults said they had discussed AIDS with friends or relatives. These percentages have remained fairly stable for many months.

Self-assessed knowledge—During the period January–March 1989, 24 percent of U.S. adults reported knowing a lot about AIDS, up from 21 percent in December 1988. Forty-three percent reported some knowledge, 25 percent claimed to know a little, and 8 percent said they knew nothing about AIDS. Increases in self-assessed knowledge were of similar magnitude in all categories of age, sex, race, and education.

General knowledge—Despite the rise in the level of self-assessed knowledge, there was little or no change in most objective measures of general knowledge about AIDS and HIV. The one improvement was in the proportion of adults who thought it definitely false that "looking at a person is enough to tell if he or she has the AIDS virus," which increased from 66 to 70 percent. The gains in this aspect of knowledge were particularly large among persons age 18–29 years (up from 71 to 78 percent responding correctly), black adults (from 55 to 64 percent), and persons with less than 12 years of school (from 47 to 52 percent).

Awareness of the main modes of HIV transmission remained at the high levels previously observed. Eighty-three percent of adults thought it definitely true that "any person with the AIDS virus can pass it on to someone else during sexual intercourse," and 80 percent said it was definitely true that "a pregnant woman who has the AIDS virus can give the AIDS virus to her baby." In addition, 94 percent thought it very likely that HIV could be transmitted by sharing needles for drug use. As was the case in 1988, the great majority of adults realized that "there is no cure for AIDS at present" (87 percent responding definitely true) and that "AIDS leads to death" (85 percent). Three-quarters (75 percent) thought it definitely false that "there is a vaccine available to the public that protects a person from getting the AIDS virus."

Misperceptions about HIV transmission—The NHIS AIDS survey includes a series of questions addressing misperceptions about HIV transmission by means of various forms of casual contact. Accurate knowledge in this area, as expressed by the proportion of adults who thought it very unlikely or definitely not possible to spread HIV through casual contact, improved throughout 1987 and between May and July 1988. After that, the proportions of adults responding correctly to these questions declined slightly, so that by December 1988, responses were similar to those recorded in May of that year. In January–March 1989, there were improvements in several of these measures (figure 1). The proportion of adults who thought it very unlikely or definitely not possible to become infected with HIV by "living near a hospital or home for AIDS patients" increased from 80 to 83 percent. With respect to "working near someone with the AIDS virus," the increase was from 67 to 71 percent. Other increases were in the proportions of adults who thought it very unlikely or definitely not possible to get HIV by "shaking



SOURCE: National Center for Health Statistics, Division of Health Interview Statistics, National Health Interview Survey.

Figure 1. Provisional estimates of percent of adults who thought it very unlikely or definitely not possible to become infected with HIV in selected ways: United States, selected months, 1988 and 1989

hands, touching, or kissing on the cheek someone who has the AIDS virus" (up from 69 to 73 percent) and by "attending school with a child who has the AIDS virus" (from 72 to 76 percent). For the other conjectured modes of transmission shown in figure 1, there were no changes in knowledge during the period January–March 1989.

Blood donation and testing—In January–March 1989, 40 percent of adults reported ever having donated blood. This includes 14 percent who donated blood since March 1985, when routine screening for HIV antibodies began, and 6 percent who claimed to have donated blood in the preceding year. Almost three-fourths of adults had heard of the blood test for the AIDS virus (i.e., the test to detect HIV antibodies), and two-thirds thought blood donations are routinely tested. Six percent of adults said that they had received a blood transfusion between 1977, when HIV is thought to have entered the United States, and 1985, when routine screening began. About half (48 percent) of all adults thought the present supply of blood is safe for transfusions. All of these estimates are similar to those reported in December 1988.

Likewise, there was no change in the proportion of adults estimated to have had their blood tested for HIV, 19 percent in January–March 1989. This figure is fairly evenly divided between persons who reported having been tested (10 percent) and those who did not report testing but had donated blood since automatic screening of donations was initiated (9 percent). The proportion of adults tested decreased sharply with age, from 26 percent of those age 18–29 years to 9 percent of those 50 years of age and over. Seventy-one percent of the individuals who had been tested for HIV reported being tested as a part of blood donation and 2 percent as part of a blood transfusion. Seventeen percent voluntarily sought testing, and 14 percent were tested as part of some other activity that requires a routine blood test.

Seven percent of adults reported plans to have their blood tested in the year following interview, about the same as in December. This proportion declined with age, from 11 percent of persons age 18–29 years to 8 and 2 percent, respectively, of those age 30–49 years and 50 years and over. Men were almost twice as likely as women to report plans to be tested, 9 versus 5 percent. Of persons who reported plans to be tested, 52 percent said that the test would be sought voluntarily as opposed to performed routinely in connection with some other activity. This is a significant increase over December, when the figure was 43 percent. The increase was especially large for adults age 18–29 years, 60 percent in January–March compared to 43 percent in December.

Preventive measures—There was no change between December 1988 and January–March 1989 in the

perceived effectiveness of various methods of preventing HIV transmission. Eighty-three percent of adults rated "two people who do not have the AIDS virus having sex only with each other" as very effective, and 31 percent thought condom use to be very effective. Fifty-four percent considered condom use somewhat effective in preventing HIV transmission during sexual intercourse. More than half of all adults stated that diaphragms, spermicides, and vasectomy were not at all effective.

Risk of getting HIV—During January–March 1989, 2 percent of adults reported belonging to one or more of the groups with behaviors associated with increased risk of AIDS (e.g., hemophiliacs, intravenous drug users, and homosexual men). This proportion has not varied since the question was introduced in May 1988.

Eighty-three percent of U.S. adults felt there was no chance of their already being infected with HIV, i.e., of "having the AIDS virus." Thirteen percent assessed their chances of having HIV as low, 2 percent as medium, and less than 1 percent as high. Seventy-eight percent of adults felt that they had no chance of becoming infected, i.e., "of getting the AIDS virus." This proportion has risen steadily since 1987. The proportions who stated that their chances of getting HIV were low, medium, and high were 17, 2 and less than 1 percent, respectively.

One adult in every 8 (12 percent) reported knowing someone with AIDS or HIV. This percentage has doubled since August 1987. Adults age 30–49 years were the most likely to report knowing someone with AIDS/HIV (16 percent), followed by persons 18–29 years (11 percent) and those 50 years of age and over (8 percent).

Suggested citation

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Symbols

-	Quantity zero
0	Quantity more than zero but less than 0.5

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1989 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, January—March 1989

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18–29 years	30–49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
	Percent distribution[1]										
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1. In the past month, have you—											
1a. Seen any public service announcements about AIDS on television?											
Yes	80	82	83	76	80	80	80	81	74	82	82
No	18	17	16	21	18	18	18	18	24	16	16
Don't know	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
1b. Heard any public service announcements about AIDS on the radio?											
Yes	44	53	48	34	49	40	43	51	36	44	50
No	52	44	48	62	47	56	53	46	61	52	46
Don't know	4	3	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	4	5
2. Were any of those public service announcements called "America Responds to AIDS"?											
Yes	22	33	24	13	21	24	21	31	23	23	22
No	12	14	12	11	13	11	12	12	11	12	13
Don't know	49	39	51	55	50	48	51	40	44	50	51
Neither heard nor saw any public service announcements	16	14	14	21	16	17	16	16	23	15	14
3. In the past month, have you read any brochures or pamphlets about AIDS?											
Yes	24	30	27	16	23	26	23	32	17	22	30
No	75	69	72	83	76	74	76	67	81	77	69
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
4. Have you ever read any brochures or pamphlets about AIDS?											
Yes	63	71	70	49	61	65	63	61	44	62	75
No	36	29	29	50	38	34	36	39	55	37	24
Don't know	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
5. Where did you get the pamphlets or brochures?[1,2]											
Clinic, other than work clinic	3	4	2	2	2	3	2	5	4	2	2
Doctor's office (HMO)	18	19	19	15	14	21	18	19	17	18	18
Drug store	2	2	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	2
Public health department	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	6	4	3	3
Received in mail without asking	29	21	29	39	29	29	31	21	30	30	29
Red Cross/Red Cross blood donation	3	3	3	1	3	2	3	1	1	2	3
Other blood donation	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1
School	12	22	10	4	12	11	11	14	12	9	14
Sent/phoned for/requested it	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0
Federal/State/local government	19	12	21	24	20	18	20	12	17	19	20
Work, other than clinic or nurse	13	10	17	10	15	11	12	16	7	12	16
Work, nurse or clinic	4	3	5	2	2	6	4	6	1	4	5
Other	16	17	16	14	17	15	15	19	17	16	16
Don't know	3	3	2	5	5	2	3	3	4	3	3
15. Have you ever discussed AIDS with any of your children aged 10-17?[3]											
Yes	63	56	64	56	49	75	64	63	52	61	70
No	37	42	35	44	50	25	36	37	47	39	29
Don't know	0	2	0	–	1	0	0	–	0	0	0
16. Have any or all of your children aged 10-17 had instruction at school about AIDS?[3]											
Yes	60	48	60	59	53	66	59	64	58	59	61
No	13	24	13	13	13	14	14	12	18	12	13
Don't know	27	28	27	28	34	20	27	23	24	29	26
21. How much would you say you know about AIDS?											
A lot	24	24	30	16	24	23	24	19	13	19	35
Some	43	49	47	34	42	44	44	37	30	48	47
A little	25	24	19	33	25	25	24	29	35	29	15
None	8	3	3	17	8	8	7	15	23	5	2
Don't know	0	0	–	0	0	0	0	–	0	–	–
22. To the best of your knowledge, is there a difference between having the AIDS virus and having the disease AIDS?											
Yes	65	66	73	55	64	65	67	57	42	65	80
No	16	23	15	11	18	14	15	18	18	18	13
Other	0	–	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	19	11	12	33	17	20	18	25	40	18	7
23a. AIDS can reduce the body's natural protection against disease.											
Definitely true	74	77	82	63	76	72	76	61	50	76	88
Probably true	12	12	9	16	12	12	12	12	18	13	8
Probably false	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	4	4	2	1
Definitely false	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	6	5	3	2
Don't know	9	6	5	16	8	10	8	17	23	7	2

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1989 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, January—March 1989—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18–29 years	30–49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
	Percent distribution[1]										
23b. AIDS is especially common in older people.											
Definitely true	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	0
Probably true	2	2	2	1	2	2	1	3	3	1	1
Probably false	17	18	14	18	17	17	17	14	18	16	17
Definitely false	74	75	78	68	74	74	75	71	62	76	79
Don't know	7	4	5	11	7	7	6	11	14	6	3
23c. AIDS can damage the brain.											
Definitely true	25	22	25	28	26	24	24	33	27	25	25
Probably true	29	29	28	31	30	29	30	26	30	30	28
Probably false	11	13	13	7	11	10	11	6	6	10	14
Definitely false	9	11	11	4	9	8	9	7	5	8	12
Don't know	26	25	23	30	24	28	26	28	33	27	20
23d. AIDS usually leads to heart disease.											
Definitely true	8	6	8	10	8	8	7	13	11	8	6
Probably true	22	20	22	24	23	22	22	21	23	23	21
Probably false	18	20	21	13	19	17	19	10	10	17	24
Definitely false	17	21	19	10	18	15	17	16	10	15	23
Don't know	35	32	30	42	32	38	34	40	45	37	26
23e. AIDS is an infectious disease caused by a virus.											
Definitely true	62	66	69	50	64	59	62	62	48	59	73
Probably true	19	20	17	21	18	20	19	19	20	21	16
Probably false	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	3	1
Definitely false	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	4	4	6	4
Don't know	12	8	7	21	11	13	12	13	25	11	5
23f. Teenagers cannot get AIDS.											
Definitely true	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Probably true	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	0
Probably false	3	2	3	6	3	4	3	5	6	4	2
Definitely false	92	96	95	87	93	92	93	88	84	93	97
Don't know	2	1	1	5	2	3	2	6	7	1	0
23g. AIDS leads to death.											
Definitely true	85	86	86	85	84	86	85	89	86	87	83
Probably true	11	11	12	11	12	10	12	7	8	10	14
Probably false	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Definitely false	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Don't know	2	1	1	3	1	2	1	3	4	1	1
23h. A person can be infected with the AIDS virus and not have the disease AIDS.											
Definitely true	55	54	63	47	55	55	57	46	39	54	67
Probably true	21	23	20	22	21	21	21	21	20	24	20
Probably false	4	6	3	4	4	4	4	5	5	5	3
Definitely false	5	7	5	4	6	4	4	7	6	5	4
Don't know	15	10	9	24	13	16	13	21	30	13	6
23i. Looking at a person is enough to tell if he or she has the AIDS virus.											
Definitely true	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	4	3	2	2
Probably true	4	3	4	6	5	4	4	5	7	4	3
Probably false	14	12	13	17	14	14	14	13	17	16	11
Definitely false	70	78	76	57	70	70	71	64	52	70	80
Don't know	10	5	5	18	9	10	9	14	22	8	3
23j. Any person with the AIDS virus can pass it on to someone else during sexual intercourse.											
Definitely true	83	88	84	79	82	84	83	84	82	85	83
Probably true	12	9	12	14	13	11	12	8	10	11	14
Probably false	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	1
Definitely false	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
Don't know	3	1	2	6	3	3	3	6	7	3	1
23k. A person who has the AIDS virus can look and feel healthy and well.											
Definitely true	48	55	55	35	51	45	49	43	32	45	61
Probably true	26	27	28	30	27	29	29	25	25	31	27
Probably false	8	6	6	10	7	8	7	8	11	9	4
Definitely false	5	5	5	7	5	6	5	8	10	5	3
Don't know	11	7	7	19	10	12	10	16	22	10	5
23l. A pregnant woman who has the AIDS virus can give the AIDS virus to her baby.											
Definitely true	80	83	83	75	79	82	81	80	76	80	84
Probably true	14	14	13	16	15	13	14	13	15	15	13
Probably false	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Definitely false	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	5	2	3	8	5	4	4	6	9	4	2

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1989 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, January—March 1989—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18–29 years	30–49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
	Percent distribution[1]										
23m. There is a vaccine available to the public that protects a person from getting the AIDS virus.											
Definitely true	2	2	1	2	1	2	1	3	3	1	1
Probably true	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	3	3	1
Probably false	9	10	8	10	9	9	9	10	12	9	8
Definitely false	75	77	82	65	77	73	77	65	58	75	85
Don't know	12	9	7	21	10	14	11	19	25	11	5
23n. There is no cure for AIDS at present.											
Definitely true	87	88	89	83	86	87	88	82	80	87	91
Probably true	6	5	6	8	7	6	6	5	6	7	5
Probably false	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	1	1
Definitely false	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	1
Don't know	4	3	2	7	4	4	3	9	10	3	1
24. How likely do you think it is that a person will get AIDS or the AIDS virus infection from—											
24a. Living near a hospital or home for AIDS patients?											
Very likely	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	2	1	1
Somewhat likely	3	4	2	3	4	2	3	4	3	4	2
Somewhat unlikely	6	6	6	7	7	6	6	8	9	6	5
Very unlikely	39	40	38	40	41	38	40	38	36	42	39
Definitely not possible	44	44	49	37	42	46	45	36	33	42	52
Don't know	6	4	4	12	6	7	5	13	16	5	2
24b. Working near someone with the AIDS virus?											
Very likely	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	1
Somewhat likely	9	9	8	10	10	9	9	8	11	10	8
Somewhat unlikely	11	12	11	12	11	11	11	12	13	12	10
Very unlikely	40	40	41	39	41	39	41	36	33	41	43
Definitely not possible	31	34	34	24	30	31	31	30	24	30	35
Don't know	7	3	4	13	6	7	6	12	16	6	3
24c. Eating in a restaurant where the cook has the AIDS virus?											
Very likely	7	6	6	8	7	7	7	8	10	7	5
Somewhat likely	18	17	16	19	19	17	18	18	21	18	15
Somewhat unlikely	15	17	15	12	15	15	15	14	12	15	16
Very unlikely	30	30	32	27	31	29	31	24	22	29	36
Definitely not possible	19	22	21	14	18	20	19	18	13	18	23
Don't know	12	7	9	20	11	13	11	18	22	12	6
24d. Kissing—with exchange of saliva—a person who has the AIDS virus?											
Very likely	26	21	26	31	26	27	26	30	30	28	22
Somewhat likely	30	30	30	29	31	29	31	26	27	30	31
Somewhat unlikely	12	14	13	9	13	11	12	10	8	11	15
Very unlikely	15	18	17	11	15	15	16	11	11	14	19
Definitely not possible	6	9	7	4	6	7	6	8	5	6	7
Don't know	10	8	7	16	9	12	10	14	18	11	5
24e. Shaking hands, touching, or kissing on the cheek someone who has the AIDS virus?											
Very likely	2	2	1	3	2	2	2	3	4	2	1
Somewhat likely	7	6	6	7	8	6	6	8	9	7	5
Somewhat unlikely	12	11	13	13	13	12	13	12	13	13	12
Very unlikely	39	38	39	39	40	38	40	35	33	40	41
Definitely not possible	34	40	36	26	32	35	34	30	25	32	40
Don't know	7	3	4	13	6	7	6	12	16	6	2
24f. Sharing plates, forks, or glasses with someone who has the AIDS virus?											
Very likely	9	8	9	10	9	9	9	11	13	9	7
Somewhat likely	20	18	20	21	20	20	20	19	21	20	19
Somewhat unlikely	13	14	14	13	14	12	13	12	11	14	15
Very unlikely	29	31	29	27	30	28	29	27	20	29	33
Definitely not possible	18	23	21	12	17	19	18	16	14	18	22
Don't know	11	7	6	17	10	11	10	14	21	10	5
24g. Using public toilets?											
Very likely	6	6	5	8	6	6	6	7	11	6	3
Somewhat likely	12	11	11	15	11	13	12	12	16	13	9
Somewhat unlikely	12	13	12	11	12	12	12	14	11	13	12
Very unlikely	34	34	35	32	36	32	35	30	23	35	39
Definitely not possible	26	29	29	19	26	26	26	21	18	24	32
Don't know	10	7	7	16	9	11	9	15	21	9	5

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1989 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, January—March 1989—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18–29 years	30–49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
	Percent distribution[1]										
24h. Sharing needles for drug use with someone who has the AIDS virus?											
Very likely	94	96	96	91	94	94	95	91	89	95	97
Somewhat likely	3	2	2	4	3	3	3	4	4	2	2
Somewhat unlikely	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
Very unlikely	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	0	0
Definitely not possible	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Don't know	2	1	1	4	2	2	2	4	5	1	1
24i. Being coughed or sneezed on by someone who has the AIDS virus?											
Very likely	7	5	5	10	6	7	6	10	10	7	5
Somewhat likely	21	18	20	24	21	21	21	20	24	21	18
Somewhat unlikely	16	17	17	15	17	16	17	14	12	17	19
Very unlikely	29	32	31	24	30	28	29	24	21	28	34
Definitely not possible	15	19	18	9	15	15	15	15	10	15	18
Don't know	12	9	9	19	11	13	12	17	23	12	6
24j. Attending school with a child who has the AIDS virus?											
Very likely	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	4	4	2	1
Somewhat likely	5	4	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	5	4
Somewhat unlikely	10	9	9	11	10	9	10	8	10	11	9
Very unlikely	42	41	43	41	44	40	43	36	35	43	45
Definitely not possible	34	40	37	27	32	36	34	32	27	34	39
Don't know	7	4	5	13	7	8	6	14	18	6	3
24k. Mosquitoes or other insects?											
Very likely	10	11	9	9	10	9	9	14	14	10	6
Somewhat likely	17	19	16	16	18	15	16	19	19	18	14
Somewhat unlikely	8	9	9	7	9	8	8	8	6	9	9
Very unlikely	24	25	26	22	26	23	26	19	18	23	29
Definitely not possible	18	18	20	15	17	19	18	16	12	16	22
Don't know	23	18	20	31	21	26	23	24	30	24	18
25. Have you ever donated blood?											
Yes	40	33	43	42	51	30	41	32	29	37	50
No	60	67	57	58	49	70	58	68	71	63	50
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0
25a. Have you donated blood since March 1985?											
Yes	14	19	17	7	17	12	15	9	5	13	21
No	86	80	83	93	83	88	85	91	94	87	79
Don't know	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
26b. Have you donated blood in the past 12 months?											
Yes	6	8	8	3	8	5	7	4	2	5	10
No	93	92	91	96	92	94	92	96	97	94	89
Don't know	1	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
27. Have you ever heard of a blood test that can detect the AIDS virus infection?											
Yes	73	79	82	59	74	73	75	64	53	74	86
No	22	18	15	34	22	22	21	31	41	21	11
Don't know	5	3	3	7	4	5	4	5	6	5	3
28. To the best of your knowledge, are blood donations routinely tested now for the AIDS virus infection?											
Yes	65	70	73	52	65	65	66	56	45	67	76
No	4	5	4	2	4	3	4	3	2	3	5
Don't know	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	4	5
Never heard of test[4]	27	21	18	41	26	27	25	36	47	26	14
29a. Have you ever received counseling or had a talk with a health professional about taking the AIDS virus test?											
Yes	4	6	5	1	4	4	4	5	2	3	5
No	69	73	77	58	70	69	71	59	50	71	80
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	–	0	0	0
Never heard of test[4]	27	21	18	41	26	27	25	36	47	26	14
29b. Was the discussion—[1,5]											
With a private doctor?	53	51	51	74	51	54	54	55	58	55	50
At a family-planning clinic?	7	10	5	10	5	9	6	13	12	9	5
On an AIDS hotline?	4	3	3	11	4	4	5	–	3	6	3
At a prenatal clinic?	8	14	5	2	1	15	9	7	14	11	6
At an STD or sexually transmitted disease clinic?	4	5	3	4	7	1	4	2	1	3	5
At an AIDS/HIV counseling and testing site?	10	9	10	16	17	5	10	12	2	14	10
With some other health professional?	38	34	42	33	39	37	38	45	30	39	40
With some other counselor?	13	10	14	15	17	9	13	9	6	17	12
30. During that discussion, did you receive information about how to avoid getting or passing on the AIDS virus?[5]											
Yes	60	66	56	60	64	57	57	77	56	63	59
No	39	34	44	40	36	42	42	23	44	37	40
Don't know	1	1	1	–	–	1	1	–	–	–	1

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1989 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, January—March 1989—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18–29 years	30–49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
31. Have you ever been advised by a health professional not to have the blood test for the AIDS virus infection?						Percent distribution[1]					
Yes	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
No	73	79	82	59	74	72	74	64	53	74	85
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Never heard of test[4]	27	21	18	41	26	27	25	36	47	26	14
32. Have you ever been advised by friends or relatives not to have the blood test for the AIDS virus infection?											
Yes	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1
No	73	78	81	59	73	72	74	63	52	74	85
Don't know	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	0	0
Never heard of test[4]	27	21	18	41	26	27	25	36	47	26	14
33. Have you had your blood tested for the AIDS virus infection?											
Yes	19	26	23	9	22	16	19	15	9	17	26
No	55	54	60	50	53	57	56	50	44	57	60
Don't know	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2
Never heard of test[4]	25	18	16	40	24	26	23	35	46	24	13
35a. How many times have you had your blood tested for the AIDS virus infection?[7]											
Once	6	8	7	2	6	5	6	7	4	5	8
Twice	1	2	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
3–5 times	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	2
6–12 times	1	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
More than 12 times	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	–	–	0	0
Don't know	10	14	11	5	12	8	11	7	4	10	14
Never heard of or never took test[8]	81	74	78	92	78	84	81	85	91	83	74
35b. How many times in the past 12 months have you had your blood tested for the AIDS virus infection?[7]											
None in the past 12 months	2	3	3	1	3	2	2	2	1	2	4
Once	5	7	6	2	5	4	5	6	3	4	6
More than once	2	2	3	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	3
Don't know	10	14	11	5	11	8	10	7	4	10	14
Never heard of or never took test[8]	81	74	77	92	78	84	81	85	91	83	74
36. Was the test/were any of the tests, including those you had before the past 12 months—[1]											
Part of a blood donation?	71	67	72	74	71	70	73	56	55	70	74
Part of a blood transfusion?[9]	2	0	2	4	2	2	2	3	2	1	2
Voluntarily sought?	17	19	16	13	14	20	15	29	27	17	14
Part of some other activity that requires a blood sample?	14	16	14	10	17	10	14	16	18	14	13
38. Did you get the results of your test/any of your tests?[9]											
Yes	56	67	51	45	52	62	55	71	72	56	53
No	43	33	47	53	47	38	45	27	27	44	46
Don't know	1	–	1	2	1	0	1	2	2	1	1
41. Do you expect to have a blood test for the AIDS virus infection in the next 12 months?											
Yes	7	11	8	2	9	5	6	9	6	6	8
No	63	63	70	55	61	64	65	49	43	65	74
Don't know	4	5	4	2	4	4	3	6	4	4	4
Never heard of test[4]	27	21	18	41	26	27	25	36	47	26	14
42. Will the test be—[1,10]											
Part of a blood donation?	41	34	49	33	43	38	46	20	23	39	51
Voluntarily sought?	52	60	45	53	49	57	46	79	76	56	38
Part of some other activity that requires a blood sample?	16	20	13	16	17	14	17	11	10	16	19
44a. Did you have a blood tranfusion at any time between 1977 and 1985?											
Yes	6	3	6	8	6	6	6	5	7	5	6
No	93	97	93	90	93	93	93	93	91	93	93
Don't know	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
44b. Do you think the present supply of blood is safe for tranfusions?											
Yes	48	52	52	42	53	44	51	36	35	48	57
No	27	29	27	27	25	29	26	35	33	28	23
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	–	0	0
Don't know	24	19	21	31	22	26	23	28	32	23	20
45. Here are some methods people use to prevent getting the AIDS virus through sexual activity. How effective is—											
45a. Using a diaphragm?											
Very effective	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	4	3	2	1
Somewhat effective	12	14	10	13	13	11	12	12	11	12	12
Not at all effective	58	62	68	44	58	59	60	47	40	59	70
Don't know how effective	21	17	15	31	20	22	21	26	33	21	14
Don't know method	6	6	4	9	7	6	5	10	13	5	3

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1989 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, January–March 1989—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18–29 years	30–49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
	Percent distribution[1]										
45b. Using a condom?											
Very effective	31	37	34	22	35	28	31	29	25	29	36
Somewhat effective	54	54	55	52	53	54	54	47	45	56	56
Not at all effective	5	5	5	5	5	6	5	7	7	6	4
Don't know how effective	8	3	4	16	6	10	8	12	18	7	3
Don't know method	2	1	1	4	2	3	2	5	5	2	1
45c. Using a spermicidal jelly, foam, or cream?											
Very effective	2	3	2	1	2	1	1	4	2	2	1
Somewhat effective	14	14	14	13	14	14	14	11	9	13	18
Not at all effective	56	63	63	42	56	55	56	51	43	57	62
Don't know how effective	23	15	17	34	22	23	23	26	34	23	16
Don't know method	6	5	4	10	7	6	6	9	13	6	3
45d. Having a vasectomy?											
Very effective	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Somewhat effective	2	4	2	2	2	2	2	4	3	2	2
Not at all effective	72	71	83	61	74	71	75	57	52	74	84
Don't know how effective	17	15	10	26	15	18	16	25	29	16	10
Don't know method	7	7	3	10	6	7	6	11	14	6	3
45e. Two people who do not have the AIDS virus having sex only with each other?											
Very effective	83	85	88	77	84	82	85	70	71	84	90
Somewhat effective	8	8	6	9	7	8	7	12	10	7	6
Not at all effective	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	5	4	2	1
Don't know how effective	5	3	3	9	4	6	5	10	11	5	2
Don't know method	2	1	1	3	1	2	1	3	4	1	1
46. What are your chances of having the AIDS virus?											
High	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
Medium	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	3	2	2	2
Low	13	18	15	6	15	11	13	13	8	12	16
None	83	77	81	90	81	85	84	79	85	85	81
Don't know	2	1	2	2	2	2	1	4	5	1	1
47. What are your chances of getting the AIDS virus?											
High	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0
Medium	2	3	2	1	2	2	2	4	2	2	2
Low	17	24	19	8	19	15	17	15	9	15	23
None	78	70	76	87	75	81	79	74	83	80	74
Don't know	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	4	5	2	1
High chance of already having AIDS virus	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
49. Do you say your chance of getting AIDS is high or medium because you—[11]											
Have had a blood transfusion?	4	1	6	6	2	6	2	8	12	2	–
Have had sexual contact with someone who might have the virus?	21	28	18	10	26	13	23	16	24	17	23
Some other reason?	59	55	66	52	51	70	61	55	44	64	65
52. Have you ever discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?											
Yes	61	69	71	45	58	64	62	59	41	60	75
No	38	31	29	55	41	36	38	41	58	39	25
Don't know	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
53. When was the last time you discussed AIDS with a friend or relative?											
0–3 days ago	7	8	8	5	7	7	6	9	5	6	9
4–7 days ago	8	8	9	6	7	8	8	9	6	7	10
8–14 days ago	6	7	7	4	6	6	6	6	4	6	7
15–31 days ago	13	15	15	9	12	13	13	12	8	13	16
More than 31 days ago	23	27	27	16	22	24	24	19	14	23	29
Don't know	4	4	4	5	4	5	4	4	4	4	4
Never discussed[12]	39	31	29	55	42	36	38	42	59	40	25
54. Have you ever personally known anyone with AIDS or the AIDS virus?											
Yes	12	11	16	8	11	12	11	13	5	10	17
No	87	89	83	91	88	87	88	86	94	89	81
Don't know	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
55. How long has it been since you saw this person?											
Within past 2 weeks	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
2 weeks–less than 1 month	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	1	1
1 month–less than 3 months	1	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	2
3 months–less than 6 months	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
6 months or more	8	7	10	5	7	8	8	8	3	7	12
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Never knew anyone with AIDS[13]	89	89	84	92	89	89	89	87	95	90	83

See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Provisional estimates of the percent of persons 18 years of age and over with selected AIDS knowledge and attitudes from the 1989 National Health Interview Survey, by selected characteristics: United States, January–March 1989—Con.

[Data are based on household interviews of the civilian noninstitutionalized population. The survey design, general qualifications, and information on the reliability of the estimates are given in technical notes]

AIDS knowledge or attitude	Total	Age			Sex		Race		Education		
		18–29 years	30–49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
	Percent distribution[1]										
56. How well do you know this person?											
Very well	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2
Fairly well	3	3	3	1	2	3	3	3	1	2	4
Not very well	4	4	6	3	4	4	4	5	2	3	7
Don't really know personally	2	2	3	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	3
Other	1	0	2	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	2
Don't know how well	0	–	0	–	0	–	0	–	0	–	–
Never knew anyone with AIDS[13]	88	89	84	92	89	88	89	87	95	90	83
57. Is any of these statements true for you?											
a. You have hemophilia and have received clotting factor concentrates since 1977.											
b. You are a native of Haiti or Central or East Africa who has entered the United States since 1977.											
c. You are a man who has had sex with another man at some time since 1977, even 1 time.											
d. You have taken illegal drugs by needle at any time since 1977.											
e. Since 1977, you are or have been the sex partner of any person who would answer yes to any of the items above (57 a-d).											
f. You have had sex for money or drugs at any time since 1977.											
Yes to at least 1 statement	2	3	3	0	3	2	2	3	2	3	2
No to all statements	98	96	97	99	97	98	98	97	98	97	98
Refused	0	0	0	–	0	0	0	–	0	–	0
Don't know	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
58. The U.S. Public Health Service has said that AIDS is one of the major health problems in the country but exactly how many people it affects is not known. The Surgeon General has proposed that a study be conducted and blood samples be taken to help find out how widespread the problem is. If you were selected in this national sample of people to have their blood tested with assurances of privacy of test results, would you have the test?											
Yes	72	78	76	63	73	71	73	72	66	73	75
No	22	17	19	29	21	22	21	21	27	21	19
Other	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Don't know	5	5	5	6	5	6	5	6	6	6	4
59. Why wouldn't you take part in the test?[14]											
Don't want to know if I have AIDS	4	9	6	2	4	4	4	6	3	5	6
Don't want any counseling about AIDS	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	1
Fear I'll get AIDS	6	6	5	5	6	5	5	5	7	5	4
Don't like to give blood	13	18	13	10	11	14	13	13	11	15	12
Don't trust Government programs	6	6	9	4	9	4	6	8	4	6	9
It is a waste of money	4	2	3	4	4	3	4	2	2	3	5
Don't believe AIDS can really be cured anyway	2	1	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1
Other	55	44	54	60	55	54	55	53	55	53	57
Don't know	1	2	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	1
61. When Federal public health officials give information about AIDS, do you believe what they say or are you doubtful about the information they give?											
Believe	67	72	68	60	67	66	67	62	56	67	72
Doubtful	28	24	28	31	28	28	27	31	31	28	25
Don't know	6	4	4	9	5	6	5	7	11	5	3
62. When they [public health officials] give advice about how to help keep from getting AIDS, do you believe their advice or are you doubtful about what they say?											
Believe	80	84	82	75	81	79	81	76	71	81	85
Doubtful	16	14	16	18	15	16	15	19	20	17	12
Don't know	4	2	2	7	3	5	4	5	9	3	2

[1] Multiple responses may sum to more than 100.
[2] Based on persons answering yes to question 4 (includes yes to question 3).
[3] Based on persons answering yes to question 11, "Do you have any children aged 10 through 17?" Question 12 was "How many do you have?"
[4] Persons answering no or don't know to question 27.
[5] Based on persons answering yes to question 29a.
[6] Includes persons answering yes to question 26a and no or don't know to questions 27 and 33.
[7] Based on yes answers to question 33. See footnote 6.
[9] Persons answering no or don't know to questions 26a, 27, and 33.
[8] Based on persons answering yes to question 33; excludes persons answering yes to question 26a.
[10] Based on persons answering yes to question 41.
[11] Based on persons answering high or medium to question 46.
[12] Based on persons answering no or don't know to question 52.
[13] Based on persons answering no or don't know to question 54.
[14] Based on persons not answering yes to question 58.

Technical notes

The National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) is a continuous, cross-sectional household interview survey. Each week, a probability sample of the civilian noninstitutionalized population is interviewed by personnel of the U.S. Bureau of the Census to obtain information on the health and other characteristics of each member of the household. Information on special health topics is collected for all or a sample of household members. The 1989 National Health Interview Survey of AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes is asked of one randomly chosen adult 18 years of age or over in each family. The estimates in this report are based on completed interviews with 8,735 persons, or about 89 percent of eligible respondents.

Table I contains the estimated population size of each of the demographic subgroups included in table 1 to allow readers to derive provisional estimates of the number of people in the United States with a given characteristic, for example, the number of men who have had their blood tested for HIV. The population figures in table I are based on 1987 data from the NHIS; they are not official population estimates. Table II shows approximate standard errors of estimates presented in table 1. Both the estimates in table 1 and the standard errors in table II are provisional. They may differ slightly from estimates made using the final data file because they were calculated using a simplified weighting procedure that does not adjust for all the factors used in weighting the final data file. A final data file covering the entire data collection period for 1989 will be available at the end of 1990.

Table I. Sample sizes for the 1989 National Health Interview Survey of AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes and estimated adult population 18 years of age and over, by selected characteristics: United States, January–March 1989

Characteristic	Sample size	Estimated population in thousands
All adults	8,735	175,260
Age		
18–29 years	2,194	47,500
30–49 years	3,446	66,900
50 years and over	3,095	60,860
Sex		
Male	3,751	83,073
Female	4,984	92,187
Race		
White	7,253	148,154
Black	1,166	19,168
Education		
Less than 12 years	2,070	40,061
12 years	3,203	68,055
More than 12 years	3,412	65,333

Table II. Standard errors, expressed in percentage points, of estimated percents from the National Health Interview Survey of AIDS Knowledge and Attitudes, by selected characteristics: United States, January–March 1989

		Age			Sex		Race		Education		
Estimated percent	Total	18–29 years	30–49 years	50 years and over	Male	Female	White	Black	Less than 12 years	12 years	More than 12 years
5 or 95	0.3	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.5
10 or 90	0.4	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.5	1.1	0.8	0.7	0.7
15 or 85	0.5	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.5	1.3	1.0	0.8	0.8
20 or 80	0.6	1.1	0.9	0.9	0.8	0.7	0.6	1.5	1.1	0.9	0.9
25 or 75	0.6	1.2	0.9	1.0	0.9	0.8	0.7	1.6	1.2	1.0	1.0
30 or 70	0.6	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.7	1.7	1.3	1.0	1.0
35 or 65	0.7	1.3	1.0	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.8	1.3	1.1	1.1
40 or 60	0.7	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.0	0.9	0.7	1.8	1.4	1.1	1.1
45 or 55	0.7	1.4	1.1	1.2	1.0	0.9	0.8	1.9	1.4	1.1	1.1
50	0.7	1.4	1.1	1.2	1.1	0.9	0.8	1.9	1.4	1.1	1.1

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